

SECRETARY OF STATE
State of Indiana

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SECRETARY OF STATE

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To: Department Heads
Indiana Colleges and Universities

Re: Request for Proposals:

“Voting System Technical Oversight Program”

During the last three years the State of Indiana and Indiana counties have invested over 40 million dollars in new electronic voting systems – based on computer technology. These computer based voting systems were required to comply with changes in Federal and State election law. Electronic voting systems used in Indiana are required to comply with State and Federal technical standards relating to reliability, accuracy, functionality, accessibility, auditing of voting results, back-up and data retention systems etc. The Indiana Secretary of State is responsible for administration and enforcement of state election law and the Indiana Elections Commission (an appointed panel) is responsible for certification of voting systems used in the state. Elected County Clerks in each of Indiana’s 97 counties have the responsibility of warehousing, maintaining, and conducting elections with the electronic voting systems. The County Clerks must also recruit and train poll workers to set-up, operate, collect and tabulate votes cast on the equipment.

Administering elections with computerized electronic voting systems that are fair, accurate, accountable, efficient and viewed as trustworthy by Indiana citizens and candidates for public office, is a complex undertaking. The overall process potentially involves varying components of the following academic disciplines:

- Understanding and application of election laws and voting system technical standards.
- Computer science and data processing technology.
- Operations and systems research and management.
- Education and training processes.
- Political science, public and governmental affairs.

It was anticipated that the rapid employment of computerized electronic voting systems in the state would involve significant technical challenges. The Indiana Legislature established the “Voting System Technical Oversight Program” in 2005. The Secretary of State was given authorization to implement the program via a Grant or Professional Services Contract. It is believed that the Indiana Election Commission, State and County Election officials as well as citizens of the State of Indiana will benefit from ongoing services provided by a full-time administrator of the “Voting Systems Technical Oversight Program”. **Public and private Indiana colleges and universities are invited to respond to the request for proposals to enter into this contract.**

After the contract administrator is selected by the Secretary of State, the “Voting Systems Technical Oversight Program” will:

1. Develop and propose voting system standards for the approval and certification of voting systems to be used in Indiana elections.
2. Review technical reports prepared by independent testing laboratories concerning voting systems that vendors wish to sell for use in Indiana elections.
3. Provide technical assistance and recommendations to the Indiana Elections Commission – as to whether proposed or modified voting systems meet certification standards.
4. Review proposed State and County contracts for the purchase of voting systems (the definition of “voting system includes hardware, firmware, software, print materials, technical support and maintenance services related to the casting and counting of votes).
5. Provide technical support and assistance with the development and negotiation of state-wide and multi-county “quantity purchase agreements” for voting systems – to achieve the maximum benefit for the state, counties and citizens of Indiana.
6. Compile and maintain an inventory of voting systems and equipment acquired, in use, or available for use in Indiana’s 97 counties.
7. Perform random voting system inventory audits and certification compliance testing in Indiana counties.

Though not required by the RFP, Colleges and Universities responding to this RFP may wish to consider or propose the establishment of a “Voting Systems Administration Center” to facilitate the on-going staffing and administration of the “Voting System Technical Oversight Program”. An example of one such “Center” is the “Center for Elections Systems at Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, Georgia (<http://elections.kennesaw.edu/>) which operates as a partnership between Kennesaw State University and the Office of the Georgia Secretary of State.

Also, though not required by the RFP, Colleges and Universities responding to the RFP may wish to consider or propose the offering of additional fee-for-services or negotiable fee-for-service, services such as:

- Development of poll worker and election administrator training programs.
- Training of poll workers and election administrators.
- Voting machine programming and “building” of electronic ballots as a service to counties.
- Voting machine certification and compliance testing services to voting system manufacturers and vendors.
- Technical assistance with and administration of vote recounts and election contests involving electronic voting systems.
- Other services to state and county election officials and Indiana Citizens.

Copies of the “Voting System Technical Oversight Program” RFP and exhibits can be viewed and downloaded via the Indiana Secretary of State’s official web site:

<http://www.in.gov/sos>.

Printed copies are available from the Indiana Secretary of State, Indiana State House, Room 201, Indianapolis, IN 46204 (317) 232-6532. Questions or requests for additional information may be directed to Jerry Bonnet, General Counsel, (317) 232-6687 (jbonnet@sos.in.gov).